



TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

READING FIRST IN TENNESSEE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Fiscal Years:

Year 1: January 1, 2004 through June 30, 2004

Year 2: July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005

Year 3: July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006

**Pursuant to H.R. 1
*No Child Left Behind Act***

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READING FIRST IN TENNESSEE

General Information

READING FIRST IN TENNESSEE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

INTRODUCTION

This Request for Proposal (RFP) is the document that eligible Reading First school districts in Tennessee must use to apply for funding pursuant to Title I, Part B, Subpart 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Reading First grants will be awarded on a competitive basis with eligible districts or consortium of districts making application through this RFP. A total of almost 11.5 million dollars is available to successful applicants in the first year (January 1, 2004 – June 30, 2004) of the Reading First grant period. A second subgrant competition for Reading First subgrants will be held in the spring of 2004 for all eligible schools in Tennessee to submit applications for funding.

In addition to other requirements of this grant as stated in this RFP, Reading First school districts must clearly demonstrate how the following will be implemented into the local Reading First in Tennessee project:

1. the selection and use of reading programs and instructional methods that are based on scientifically based reading research (SBRR),
2. the use of proven assessment tools to measure student strengths and weaknesses and thereby determine instruction, and
3. a significant increase in professional development to ensure that all teachers have the skills necessary to effectively teaching reading, resulting in substantial gains in student achievement.

This process will help to meet the goal of every child reading proficiently by the end of third grade

A school district receiving a Reading First grant will have the opportunity to continue funding for three years if annual in-depth progress reports by an evaluator contracted by the State of Tennessee show that goals and objectives are met. At the end of the three year period, there will be a rigorous evaluation of school district and school level performance by the evaluator contracted by the State of Tennessee. If the evaluation demonstrates that the goals and objectives of the Reading First program have been met successfully at both the district level and the school level, then the district may receive additional funding beyond the three years for a period of up to three more years. Again, annual in-depth progress reports will be required and adequate progress must be demonstrated.

Grants will be awarded to districts demonstrating the greatest need based on academic achievement and poverty.

TENNESSEE'S READING FIRST GOALS

Tennessee's Reading First goals are based in scientifically based reading research and will guide all state and local activities, Tennessee Reading First will meet the following goals:

GOAL 1 - Every child will be able to read at or above grade level by the end of the 3rd grade.

GOAL 2 -K-3 teachers and special education teachers will receive the results-based professional development necessary to enable them to teach reading effectively and to make sound decisions regarding reading instruction.

GOAL 3 -K-3 building-level principals and Literacy Leaders will receive results-based professional development necessary for them to plan, organize, implement and monitor reading programs based on

scientifically-based reading research as well as develop instructional communities of learners around reading.

GOAL 4 - Reading programs based on SBRR will be implemented for students in grades K-3.

GOAL 5 - K-3 classroom teachers will be prepared to screen, identify and diagnose reading problems facing students in K-3 classroom. (The knowledge gained through assessment results will drive instruction and/or change instruction and monitor learning).

PURPOSE OF GRANT

The RFP was prepared to provide eligible districts the information necessary to successfully apply for a Reading First Grant.

The purpose of Reading First is to ensure that all children will read on or above grade level by the end of the third grade. Through Reading First, the State of Tennessee will provide assistance to local school districts to:

- Ensure that Reading First classrooms, as well as other classrooms in the district, establish a core reading program for kindergarten through third grade that is based on scientifically based reading research (SBRR) and includes the five essential components of reading instruction; i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency (including oral reading skills), vocabulary development and comprehension strategies, and
- Ensure that the classroom teacher and the individual classroom are recognized as key to improving reading instruction.

Assistance provided by the state will include: high quality targeted professional development in reading that is based on SBRR, technical assistance in fiscal and program areas, guidance in the selection of materials and assessments and ongoing monitoring.

Reading First funds will be distributed to quality proposals that show the most promise for successful implementation, focusing on the classroom level, and for raising student achievement in reading.

It is critical that the proposal of each applicant:

1. **Demonstrates** a deep understanding of the five essential components of effective reading programs,
2. **Establishes** that the proposed Reading First activities will operate in a coherent, seamless fashion,
3. **Details** how all Reading First activities incorporate scientifically based reading research, and
4. **Addresses** each of Tennessee's Reading First goals.

Carefully read the Guidance document provided as an attachment with this Request for Proposal. The Guidance document reviews the Five Essential Components of Reading Instruction. It also provides an overview of research basis for Tennessee's application for Reading First funds. That application guides Reading First activities at the State level, and, in turn, the Reading First activities of local education agencies receiving Reading First funding through the State.

In the Guidance document you will note that (1) the five essential components of reading instruction are phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development and comprehension and (2) that scientifically based reading research is research that applies rigorous, systematic and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development, reading instruction, and reading difficulties.

It will be very difficult to develop a competitive application for Reading First funds without carefully reading the Guidance document.

FUNDING AVAILABLE

A total of \$11.5 million of \$14 million is available for funding through the Reading First Grant Program from January 1, 2004 through June 30, 2004. In awarding grants to districts that meet the eligibility criteria and the design requirements of this program, the Tennessee Department of Education will make awards that are of sufficient size and scope to support the costs of implementing the particular scientifically based reading activities identified or developed by the districts for the schools that they select to participate in the Reading First program.

The review process for this grant program will be standards-based. Grant applications must meet each of the criteria in the Meets Standard category of the evaluation rubric to receive funding. Applications that meet all the relevant standards may request funding in the range of \$200,000.00.

The total allocation for each district or consortium of districts will depend upon the expense of the selected program(s) of instruction, number/percentage of K-3 students reading below grade level, staff population, and other local considerations.

Pursuant to the requirements of the federal enabling legislation, each LEA that successfully competes for a subgrant will receive at least the same percentage of the state's total Reading First subgrant funds as it received of the total Title I, Part A funds received by all Tennessee LEAs for the preceding fiscal year. Keep in mind, however, that Tennessee Reading First requires a minimum funding level of \$200,000 for local grants that successfully compete for these funds.

Literacy Leaders and the K-3 teachers and building leaders in schools that receive Reading First funds will be expected to participate in a range of state level professional development activities during the grant term, including required participation in state-sponsored Reading First in Tennessee's ten (10) days of professional development, four (4) days of Literacy Leader Training, and a one-day regional meetings for Literacy Leaders and a representative school team.

DURATION OF GRANTS

Grants will be awarded for a three-year period, subject to an annual demonstration of adequate yearly progress in reading. The first grant year will run from January 1, 2004 through June 30, 2004. After the first year, the grant year will run from July 1 through June 30. Upon a rigorous review after the third year, LEAs will be eligible for three additional years of funding if all criteria are met.

Competitive Priority

Federal law requires that competitive priority be given to eligible local educational agencies that meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. At least fifteen percent of the students served by the eligible local educational agency are from families with incomes below the poverty line; or
2. At least 6,500 children served by the eligible local educational agency are from families with incomes below the poverty line.

EDGAR: Consistent with federal Education Department General Accounting Regulation (EDGAR) requirements, two or more local educational agencies may apply as a consortium. Each local educational agency within the consortium must meet the Reading First eligibility requirements.

A local educational agency that receives a Reading First subgrant may only distribute funds to schools within that LEA that both:

1. Are among the schools served by the LEA with the highest percentages or numbers of students in kindergarten through grade 3 reading below grade level, based on the most currently available data; and
2. Are identified for school improvement under section 1116(b) of ESEA or have the highest percentages or numbers of children counted under section 1124(c).

Charter School Eligibility: A charter school may receive funding through its LEA's grant if it meets the eligibility criteria.

Support for Existing Reading Programs: Eligible districts may use Reading First funds to support schools that have already begun to implement a reading program based on scientifically based reading research, including schools that have received Tennessee Reading Excellence Act subgrants. Reading First funds may be applied to expand and strengthen existing programs, however, only if these programs meet all the criteria and requirements of the Reading First program as set out in federal law. Particularly important will be the focus of Reading first on improving literacy instruction using SBRR in K-3 classrooms building-wide.

Private School Funding: Funds awarded to State educational agencies and local educational agencies under Reading First are subject to the requirements of Section 9501 of ESEA (Participation by Private School Children and Teachers). The statute requires LEAs to provide private school children and their teachers or other educational personnel with educational services that address their needs related to Reading First on an equitable basis with public school children and teachers. LEAs must provide these services in a timely manner. Funds provided for educational services and other benefits for private school children and their teachers must be equal, taking into account the number and educational needs of the children to be served, to the funds provided for participating public school children. All services and benefits provided to private school children and their teachers under Reading First must be secular, neutral, and non-ideological. Local educational agencies seeking Reading First subgrants must consult with appropriate private school officials during the design and development of their Reading First plans on such issues as determining eligibility of private school children, identifying the children's needs; what services will be offered; how, where, and by whom services will be provided; and how the services will be assessed. In general, private school children in the areas served by public schools receiving Reading First funds would be eligible. This determination can be made either by the residence of private school children in the attendance area of a public school receiving Reading First funds or by the location of a private school in the attendance area of a public school receiving Reading First funds.

FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANT ACTIVITIES

Use of Funds

- Funds must be used to supplement and not supplant any moneys currently being used to provide eligible students with reading services or programs.
- LEAs must use Reading First funds only for activities based on scientifically-based reading research.
- No planning activities may be funded by this program.
- An eligible local educational agency that receives a subgrant may use up to 3.5 percent of its Reading First funds for its own administration purposes.

Program Design

For a more comprehensive review of information on SBRR, assessment, programs, and materials, see Section VI, "Guidance in Understanding Scientifically Based Reading Research." Federal guidelines governing the use of Reading First funds require that proposed Reading First activities and plans must include, but need not be limited to:

1. **Instructional reading assessments** - Selection and administration of rigorous screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional reading assessments with proven validity and reliability. These assessments must measure progress in the essential components of reading instruction and identify students who may be at risk for reading failure or who are already experiencing reading difficulty.
2. **Reading program** - Selection and implementation of a core program of reading instruction based on scientifically based reading research that includes the essential components of reading instruction and provides such instruction to children in kindergarten through grade 3 in the schools served by the LEA, including children:
 - a. with reading difficulties
 - b. at risk of referral to special education based on those difficulties

- c. evaluated under section 614 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, but not identified as having a disability [in accordance with IDEA 614(b)(5) as defined in section 602]
- d. served under IDEA primarily due to a specific learning disability related to reading (as defined in IDEA section 602)
- e. deficient in the essential components of reading instruction
- f. identified as having limited English proficiency

A high-quality reading program that is based on scientifically based research must include instructional content based on the five essential components of reading instruction integrated into a coherent instructional design. A coherent design includes explicit instructional strategies, coordinated instructional sequences, ample practice opportunities and aligned student materials. The design should also consider the allocation of time, ensuring a protected, uninterrupted block of time of more than ninety (90) minutes for reading instruction.

3. **Instructional materials** - Selection and implementation of supplemental and intervention programs and materials which support the teaching of the five essential elements of comprehensive reading instruction, include effective instructional activities and are based on scientifically based reading research.
4. **Professional development** - Professional development for teachers of kindergarten through grade 3 and special education teachers of kindergarten through grade 12 will prepare these teachers in all of the essential components of reading instruction. Professional development must be provided that will assist teachers in becoming fully qualified for reading instruction. Providers of professional development must base training in reading instruction on scientifically based reading research with modules specified by the Tennessee Department of Education. Professional development must address the following:
 - a. Information, instructional materials, programs, strategies and approaches based on scientifically based reading research, including early intervention, classroom reading materials, and remedial programs and approaches, and
 - b. Instruction in the use of screening, diagnostic, and classroom based instructional reading assessments and other procedures that effectively identify students who may be at risk for reading failure or who are having difficulty reading.
5. **Evaluation strategies** - Collection and summary of valid and reliable data to document the effectiveness of Reading First in individual schools and in the LEA as a whole and to stimulate and accelerate improvement by identifying the schools that produce significant gains in reading achievement.
6. **Reporting** - The LEA must report data for all students and categories of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(iv)(II) of the No Child Left Behind Act.
7. **Access to reading material** - Promotion of reading and library programs that provide access to engaging reading material.
8. **Additional Federal requirements** - The federal review process for awarding Reading First grants to states applied additional requirements related to the design of local Reading First programs, such as instructional leadership and district-provided technical assistance. The rubric that the state (operating through an expert review panel) will apply to review local subgrant applications incorporates all of these federal requirements.

EXPECTED COMMITMENTS FROM PARTNERS **participating in** **READING FIRST in TENNESSEE**

The following is a summary of commitments expected of Reading First participants (teachers, schools, districts and the State). This summary will help potential applicants understand:

- the Reading First program design and requirements, and
- the dynamic partnership that will evolve among participants over the three-year term of the grants.

1. Reading teachers in Reading First schools will:

- Rethink current practices and modify those that are ineffective based on examination of student data and scientifically based research on reading;
- Understand how children learn to read;
- Have both a theoretical and practical knowledge of the five elements of comprehensive reading instruction and their relationship to one another;
- Administer screening, progress monitoring, diagnostic and outcome assessments in accordance with the State Reading First Assessment Calendar in order to identify students experiencing reading difficulty;
- Design and implement appropriate instructional interventions based on assessment results; and
- Participate in all required Reading First professional development activities, including building-level coaching by the Literacy Leader.

NOTE: In the Reading First program, the term “reading teachers” denotes all K-3 teachers, K-12 special educators, ELL teachers, and reading specialists in schools and districts that receive Reading First funds.

2. Reading First schools will:

- Budget sufficient funds and time for teachers, principals, and Literacy Leaders to participate in all Reading First professional development sessions required for eligible LEAs/schools including:
 - The foundation Intermediate and Advanced levels of professional development. The initial (Foundations) professional development requires a 10 day commitment (five full days in a summer Reading Academy and five full days in a Reading Academy provided at the school site.) The Intermediate professional development is a four day Reading Academy; the Advanced Reading Academy is two days. These professional development opportunities take place over the three-year grant period.
 - Monthly grade-level meetings that must involve the teachers, principal, support staff, and the Literacy Leader.
 - In-class coaching of teachers (suggested minimum - 2 sessions per month for each teacher).
 - Ninety hours per year of in-school staff development, in addition to the state-sponsored and required professional development, which include the Reading Academies.
- Employ a full time Literacy Leader to coordinate the Reading First activities at the school and to support the implementation of SBRR classroom practices by K-3 teachers, including special needs, ELL and Title I teachers.
- Ensure that K-3 teachers will meet performance expectations of the three levels of training (Foundations, Intermediate and Advanced) over the duration of the grant.
- Ensure that teacher performance in classrooms meets Reading First performance expectations within a reasonable period of time. Teacher evaluations by the principal/supervisor will help to meet this requirement.
- Address K-3 content standards and grade level expectations in reading.
- Exercise available Title II options for leveraging resources to support Reading First goals.
- Promote and coordinate reading, library and literacy programs to provide access to engaging reading materials.
- Evaluate the impact of Reading First activities on student achievement and participate in the external evaluation of the Reading First initiative.
- Participate in the National Evaluation, if requested.

3. The Reading First LEAs will:

- Ensure access to high-quality, ongoing results-based professional development (including coaching) for all K-3 teachers in eligible schools that emphasizes classroom instruction and rigorous classroom assessments based on SBRR, including the five essential components of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary development and reading comprehension). Simply put, this means that all teachers in schools receiving Reading First funds MUST, during the first year of the grant, attend a five day summer Reading Academy; attend a five day school-based Reading Academy; engage in at least 90 hours of additional staff

developed in accordance with the school's Reading First Professional Development Plan and coordinated by the school's Literacy Leader.

- Ensure that each building literacy leader receives ongoing training and support. Simply put, this means that Literacy Leaders must attend all professional development required for all teachers plus three days of leadership training, one day of classroom observation training and one day of assessment training.
- Ensure both district and building leadership for Reading First activities have the qualifications and have committed the time necessary to accomplish student achievement gains.
- Assist all eligible schools in selecting and using valid, reliable classroom assessments to screen, identify and diagnose reading difficulties in K-3 students in accordance with State requirements and criteria.
- Ensure that the reading instructional programs, strategies and interventions to be implemented by participating schools are aligned with the Reading First plan and the district's school improvement plan and that the programs, strategies and interventions are clearly based on scientifically based reading research.
- Support eligible Reading First schools in the use of data to monitor student progress and accelerate performance.
- Encourage principals' leadership in the participating schools in support of Reading First activities.
- Ensure that funds are being leveraged with other local, state and federal funds (e.g., Titles I, II, III and V) and that accountability for cost-effective management is provided.

4. The Tennessee State Leadership for Reading First will:

- Clearly define the expectations that eligible local schools must meet when they participate in Reading First, including the very clear reliance on scientifically based reading research (SBRR), and fund only those applications that meet a rigorous definition
- Work with in-state and external experts to make the best use of scientifically based reading research related to planning professional development and technical assistance opportunities for Tennessee K-3 teachers, Literacy Leaders and principals.
- Develop, identify and provide high-quality professional development to enable K-3 classroom teachers to teach reading effectively.
- Define teacher performance expectations for Foundations, Intermediate and Advanced levels of training.
- Provide training, technical assistance and advocacy to build the capacity of eligible LEAs/schools to implement SBRR in reading instruction, classroom assessment and professional development.
- Make sure the expertise and time available for technical assistance is sufficient to support the work of the district and school leadership teams and allows intervention in a timely manner where necessary.
- Apply accountability through (1) the state's policy infrastructure, (2) monitoring Reading First activities and impact, (3) requirements for adequate yearly progress in reading to secure continuation funding and (4) the external evaluation of the initiative.
- Disseminate what works - both to help the Reading First sites succeed and to share the work of the Reading First sites with other districts and schools in the state.
- Coordinate The Reading First in Tennessee with other literacy-related reform initiatives to deepen understanding of SBRR in all state literacy activities.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

To assist eligible applicants, the Tennessee Department of Education will offer a series of training workshops to applicant teams. At these sessions, participants will receive assistance in the grant development process. Participation in these workshops is a requirement for submission of a Reading First subgrant application.

Sessions will be tailored for district leaders as well as building leadership teams to address explicit expectations regarding the five essential components of reading, determining scientific research base for

assessments and activities, leadership expectations, and professional development. In addition, individual consultation in the writing, planning, and revision of Reading First proposals will be available through telephone conferences and emails.

LEA applications will not be funded unless they attain a high minimum score (70 percent of the total) on each section of the application. This approach to scoring will prevent an application that has deficiencies in one section of the plan from compensating for those defects with high scores on other sections. In this way, the review process will ensure that funded local Reading First plans address all the critical components related to literacy instruction required by the No Child Left Behind Act, and that these components are aligned.

STATE DEFINITION OF SUBGRANT ELIGIBILITY

- a) The LEA is among the local educational agencies in the State with the highest numbers or percentages of students in kindergarten through grade 3 reading below grade level, based on the most current data available; and
- b) The LEA has jurisdiction over at least one of the following:
 - I. A geographic area that includes an area designated as an empowerment zone, or an enterprise community, under part 1 of subchapter U of chapter 1 of the Internal Revenue Code;
 - II. A significant number or percentage of schools that are identified for school improvement under Title I, Part A; or
 - III. The highest numbers or percentages of children who are counted for allocations under Title I, Part A, in comparison to other LEAs in the State.
- c) Tennessee will designate the districts having the lowest twenty percent (20%) NCE scores in student achievement in reading on the third grade TCAP scores for *Reading First* eligibility. These selected districts and schools will meet all criteria of eligibility.

REQUIRED PRIORITIES

The LEA meets the competitive priority requirements relating to poverty by meeting one of the following criteria:

- a. At least fifteen percent of the students served by the eligible educational agency be from families with income below the poverty line, or
- b. At least 6,500 children served by the eligible educational agency be from families with income below the poverty line.

LOCAL USE OF FUNDS

A local educational agency that receives a Reading First subgrant may only distribute funds to schools within the LEA that are both:

- 1. Among the schools served by the LEA with the highest percentages or numbers of students in kindergarten through grade 3 reading below grade level, based on the most current data available; and
- 2. Identified for school improvement under Title I, Part A or have the highest percentages or numbers of children counted for allocations under section Title I, Part A.

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR AWARDING SUBGRANTS

Tennessee will award Reading First funds only to the LEAs that will implement high-quality reading programs based on SBRR that meet all the requirements of the Reading First program. Reading First subgrants will be awarded on a competitive basis to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) meeting the requirements of the Reading First program and the State Definition of Subgrant Eligibility. Tennessee's rubric for eligibility for subgrant funding is provided in this Reading First application.

Tennessee proposes to have two three-year grant cycles during the six-year term of the Reading First program in the first round of competition. During the initial three-year grant term, LEAs funded in the first round of grant competition will be required to show adequate yearly progress to receive continuation funding for each year. LEAs that have shown strong reading gains each year and have significantly increased student achievement at the end of the three years will be eligible to participate in the second three-year grant term. All current REA schools must (1) have shown adequate yearly progress under the REA grant, (2) be eligible for the Reading First subgrants as defined under Reading First eligibility, (3) have met all requirements of the REA grant., and (4) be included in the LEAs Reading First application. Tennessee will award fifteen grants to LEAs to approximately fifty (50) schools at a minimum of \$200,000.per school. Four (4) grants will be awarded in each of the three grand divisions of Tennessee to ensure that eligible schools across the state have equal representation in receiving Reading First subgrants. The remaining three grants will be awarded to LEAs across the state.

This second Reading First subgrant application process will be for eligible Reading First LEAs for the 2004-05 school year. REA schools must (1) have shown adequate yearly progress under the REA grant, (2) be eligible for the Reading First subgrants as defined under Reading First eligibility, (3) have met all requirements of the REA grant., and (4) be included in the LEAs Reading First application.. LEAs funded in the second round of grant competition will have one three-year grant cycle and one two-year grant cycle. If funding is available, the two-year grant cycle will become a three-year cycle. During the initial three-year grant term, LEAs will be required to show adequate yearly progress to receive continuation funding for each year. LEAs that have shown strong reading gains each year and have significantly increased student achievement at the end of the three years will be eligible to participate in the two-year grant term. Tennessee will award five grants to LEAs to approximately 15 schools at a minimum of \$200,000.00 per school. Three of the grants will be awarded in each of the three grand divisions of Tennessee to ensure that eligible schools across the state have equal representation in receiving Reading First subgrants. The remaining two grants will be awarded to LEAs across the state.

The following looks at Reading First in Tennessee funding years:

Reading First LEAs awarded subgrants in first round of competition

2003-04 grant year (annual eval)

2004-05 grant year (annual eval)

2005-06 grant year (rigorous eval to determine future funding for final three-year grant term)

Reading First LEAs awarded subgrants in the second round of competition

2004-05 grant year (annual eval)

2005-06 grant year (annual eval)

2006-07 grant year (rigorous eval to determine future funding for final two-year grant term.)

The deadline for applications for the first grant cycle will be November 24, 2003.

The review process will begin December 8, 2003. A team, consisting of a minimum of three members of the expert review panel, will review each application. The team will designate a lead member for each application it reviews.

Panel members will rate each application individually and then meet as a group to discuss their findings and scores. The designated lead member will facilitate this discussion and move the panel members to a consensus decision about the points to award the applications.

Tennessee State Department personnel will collect all results and complete the review of budgetary considerations, geographic representation, and the competitive priorities. They will consult the expert review teams on any unresolved issues and rank the applications in order to make funding recommendations to the Reading First Leadership Team. All applicants will receive written feedback from the review panel.

Tennessee Department of Education personnel will solicit recommendations for participants on the expert review panel from all the various leadership and management groups associated with Reading First. The panel will include individuals with expertise in SBRR, professional development, program management and administration, and instructional assessments.

Tennessee Department of Education personnel will provide training to members of the expert review teams prior to the review of the applications. This training will provide an overview of the training materials provided for applicants in the required workshops. It will focus panel members on the application criteria and provide them, as a group, with an opportunity to apply the criteria to sections of a sample application.

**READING FIRST
IN TENNESSEE**

**SUBGRANT
APPLICATION
PACKAGE**

Section I SCHOOLS TO BE SERVED

Districts must present rationale and criteria for school selection that both (1) address the Reading First eligibility guidelines and (2) present a case for both district and building capacity to “make a difference” with these funds.

The Tennessee State Department of Education will provide a list of eligible schools to each eligible LEA based on the definition under Local Use of Funds. The LEA will select the number of schools to be served based on the funding available to the LEA, with schools being most in need receiving first consideration.

1. Which of the LEAs eligible schools will be selected for Reading First funding?
2. Describe how you determined that the award would result in sufficient funding at each school to support program.
3. Describe how the number of schools identified is reasonable and appropriate considering the number of schools in the district that meet eligibility requirements.
4. Describe the district capacity to support the number of schools proposed.
5. If the LEA has Reading Excellence Act (REA) schools that are eligible for Reading First and these REA school(s) are selected to be Reading First schools, then the LEA must include the following in the grant proposal:
 - a. Discuss individually the success of the REA school(s) in meeting all of the requirements of the REA subgrant – be specific.
 - b. Show the exact improvement in K-3 reading in the REA school(s) as evidenced by valid and reliable assessments.
 - c. Discuss the use of REA funding and the impact on the school(s).
 - d. Explain *in detail* how the school will use the new Reading First funding in conjunction with REA funding.
 - e. Demonstrate the effects of REA professional development on improving teacher’s instructional methods and student achievement in the REA school(s). Please be specific.
6. What is your plan for addressing the needs of schools not receiving Reading First funding?
7. How will existing resources be used to expand the Reading First program?

Section II INSTRUCTIONAL ASSESSMENTS

This section addresses the role that rigorous screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based assessments play in making sure barriers K-3 students face in learning to read are identified early for effective intervention. Districts and selected schools must have a plan for selecting and using these valid and reliable assessments within their instructional programs. Specific guidelines for the selection of these assessments will be available at the pre-application workshops.

Tennessee’s Reading First program will use reading assessments to accomplish four purposes: (1) screening, (2) diagnosis, (3) progress monitoring, and (4) outcome assessments. The State will provide guidance to this activity by issuing an approved list of reading assessments based on the list of instruments contained in the Final Report: Analysis of Reading Assessment of Instrument for K-3.

The state will select the screening instrument to be used by all Reading First schools.

The Terra Nova (TCAP), which is administered to all students in Tennessee’s school for grade 3–8 students will be used for outcome purposes for grade 3.

The state has selected the following instruments for outcome assessment to be used in grades K-3.

Common Outcome Assessment Instruments

Kindergarten: phonemic awareness, phonics and vocabulary using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills – 5th edition (DIBELS) for phonemic awareness and phonics, and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test III (PPVT-3) for vocabulary.

1st Grade: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, reading comprehension and vocabulary using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills – 5th edition (DIBELS) for phonemic awareness, phonics and fluency, and the TerraNova-CAT for vocabulary and text comprehension.

2nd Grade: fluency, reading comprehension, and vocabulary using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills – 5th edition (DIBELS) for fluency, and the TerraNova-CAT for vocabulary and text comprehension.

3rd Grade: fluency, reading comprehension and vocabulary using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills – 5th edition (DIBELS) for fluency, and the TerraNova-CAT for vocabulary and text comprehension.

School systems may select diagnostic and progress monitoring assessment tools not on the list of those analyzed by the Reading First Reading Assessment Committee. However, these instruments must be analyzed by the school system with the same rigor used by the Reading Assessment Committee. The “Analysis of Reading Assessment Measure Coding Form”, Final Edition, Revision # 7, February 2002 will be included as an addendum to the local school system application guidelines for Reading First.

School systems and eligible schools must have a plan for selecting and using valid and reliable assessments within the reading instructional program. The applicant must administer screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome assessments. The application must provide a list of assessment instruments the applicant proposes to use for diagnostic and progress monitoring. The State will require the use of common screening and outcome assessments. The applicant must provide assurances that it will use the screening and outcome instruments selected by the State as common assessment tools. The applicant must also provide assurance that it will adhere to the assessment schedule set by the State. Applicants should describe how instruction and intervention is guided by assessment results and how assessments are aligned with instruction. Guidelines and additional information for the selection of assessments will be made available at the pre-application workshop.

The local application must:

1. Assure that the state selected assessments for screening and outcome measurements at each grade level Kindergarten through Grade 3 will be used appropriately.
2. Describe the selection process for the diagnostic and progress monitoring assessments for reading. Which assessments will be used at each grade level?
3. Provide evidence of the validity and reliability of diagnostic and progress monitoring for the use for which they are intended.
4. Describe the process for administering screening, diagnostic, progress monitoring, and outcome assessments and assure that the assessment schedule set by the State will be followed.
5. Describe the process for ensuring that teachers and other appropriate persons are trained to administer and analyze assessments.
6. Describe how information from assessments will guide and inform instruction.
7. Describe how information from assessments will be used to guide and inform interventions.
8. If the progress monitoring and diagnostic assessments selected by the school system for use in Reading First are not listed on the Final Report, provide copies of the completed “Analysis of Reading Assessment Measure Coding Form” for each assessment selected.
9. Describe how K-3 schools that do not receive Reading First funds are included in the school system’s assessment plan.

Section III INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES AND PROGRAMS

The federal Reading First program includes explicit expectations for identifying instructional programs and strategies based on SBRR that will address the five essential components of reading and enable all K-3 students to become proficient readers.

The LEA must demonstrate the full implementation of a scientifically based comprehensive core reading program by using *A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis* (see Appendix C) (Simmons and Kame'enui, University of Oregon) for verification. All reading programs must meet the requirements of SBRR with verification of each using the same guide. Additionally, all reading strategies and materials must meet the criteria of SBRR. LEAs must discuss the following information:

1. Discuss the comprehensive core reading program currently used by the selected school(s).
 - a. Name the program(s). Does it meet all of the requirements of a comprehensive SBRR reading program? Please verify in detail using *A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis* (Simmons and Kame'enui, University of Oregon). The state will determine through a review of the forms submitted as documentation by the LEA that the reading program is comprehensive and meets all *Reading First* requirements.
 - b. If the core reading program does not meet all SBRR requirements, will a different comprehensive core program be purchased? What will be your selection process? Please explain the process in detail, including personnel who will help to make the decision. Please verify in detail that the program to be purchased meets all the requirements of a comprehensive SBRR reading program by using *A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating a Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis* (Simmons and Kame'enui, University of Oregon).

The LEA must verify that the core reading program currently in use demonstrates that it meets the Reading First program requirements according to *A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating A Core Reading Program* (Simmons and Kame'enui, University of Oregon). If the Consumers Guide demonstrates that the LEAs/school's core reading program does not meet the requirements of a Reading First core, comprehensive Reading Program, the LEA will implement a new core, comprehensive reading program meeting all Reading First requirements, or will immediately discard all programs not meeting the research based requirements of the Reading First definition of a comprehensive reading program and replace them with programs meeting these standards. LEAs will be mandated to name the replacement programs and demonstrate through the Consumer's Guide that they meet the Reading First requirements. All programs discarded must be identified and listed in the subgrant application. Finally, the proposal must clearly demonstrate how comprehensive reading programs based on SBRR will be implemented without layering selected programs on top of non-research based programs already in use. LEAs must include "*A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating A Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis*" to assess all components of the comprehensive reading program.
 - c. Additionally, the LEA must demonstrate and document in the subgrant application the process used in determining the choice(s) of all additional programs, materials and methods, and how the additional resources meet the SBRR requisite. Finally, the LEA must demonstrate that the additional resources align coherently with the core reading program to form a comprehensive reading program that meets all Reading First requirements. The state will determine through a review of the forms submitted as documentation by the LEA that the core reading program is comprehensive and meets all Reading First requirements. The LEA must assure in the Reading First application that discarded programs and supplemental materials will not be used in any way in the school district. Only LEAs having comprehensive reading programs based on SBRR will be eligible to receive RF funding.
 - d. The LEA subgrant application must demonstrate that all instructional strategies meet the following standards:
 1. alignment with the Tennessee reading standards;

2. based on scientific based research,
3. explicit and systematic;
4. grounded in the five essential components of reading; and
5. aligned with instructional materials.

The proposal must also describe how the instructional strategies and programs will enable students to become proficient readers and accelerate performance. LEAs must discuss their program monitoring procedures to ensure progress of students who are reading below grade level. Additionally, the subgrant application presents a record of student achievement gains and effective use of prior grant dollars implementing reading instruction based upon scientifically based reading research, e.g. Reading Excellence Act grant implementation within eligible schools.

- e. Is there a professional development plan in the comprehensive core reading program (current program or program to be purchased) that ensures that teachers have the skills and support necessary to implement the program effectively and to meet the needs of individual students? Detail the plan. Discuss initial and future support for the professional staff in meeting their instructional needs.
 - f. Is the comprehensive core reading program (current program or program to be purchased) aligned with state reading standards? Please verify.
 - g. Does the comprehensive core reading program (current program or program to be purchased) include instructional content based on the five essential components of reading instruction integrated into a coherent instructional design? Please explain.
 - h. Detail the plan for monitoring the program to ensure teacher performance and to meet accountability standards.
 - i. Explain your plan to have a comprehensive core reading program based on SBRR in K-3 grades in all schools, including non-*Reading First* schools, in the district.
 - j. Please confirm that the use of reading programs, materials and methods that do not meet the SBRR requirement will be discontinued. Name the programs, materials and methods that will be discontinued.
 - k. If a new comprehensive reading program is being purchased or additional materials are being purchased to bring the current program into compliance of a comprehensive reading program, when and how will implementation occur? How will the additional materials be integrated into the comprehensive reading program? Please explain the timeline for implementation.
 - l. Discuss other potential problems or difficulties in implementing this program.
 - m. Explain how instructional programs, materials and strategies will be implemented without layering selected programs on non-research based programs. The intent of this section is to ensure that materials that meet the SBRR requirement are not layered over materials that do not meet the SBRR requirement. As stated earlier, the programs, materials and strategies not meeting the requirements of SBRR will be discontinued.
2. Discuss and explain classroom management. Please include, but do not be not limited to, the following:
 - a. The grant requires more than ninety (90) minutes per day of uninterrupted reading time. Please discuss scheduling to meet this need.
 - b. Discuss how flexible grouping will be used to meet the reading needs of the students.
 - c. Demonstrate that planned interventions are SBRR based.
 - d. Explain how the needs of individual students will be met.
 - e. Explain the district's plan to implement these procedures in K-3 grades in all schools, including non-*Reading First* schools, in the district.
 3. Discuss the school's assessment procedures.
 - a. Show how assessments will be used to drive instruction.
 - b. Explain how schools will use screening assessments to identify children in need of additional instructional support, diagnostic assessments to determine student's specific instructional needs, and progress monitoring assessments to ensure that adequate progress in reading growth is being achieved throughout the year.

- c. Explain how the assessments used in the school will meet the overall accountability requirements of the grant, including outcome assessments.
- d. Explain the district's plan for assessment procedures in K-3 grades in all schools, including non-*Reading First* schools, in the district.

In summary, Reading First subgrant applications submitted by LEAs must outline a clear and specific plan, detailing how student performance will increase through the use of scientifically based reading programs, methods, and materials. Furthermore, this plan must include specific benchmarks for monitoring the progress of students who are found to be reading below grade level. Finally, the scoring rubric provides direction for ensuring that the plan is carefully reviewed and appropriately scored by the expert review panel.

SECTION IV INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

This element addresses instructional materials, including supplemental and intervention programs and materials. Districts and selected schools must have a plan for selecting and using these instructional materials for their intended purposes and integrating them into the comprehensive reading program.

The state anticipates that the plan submitted by the school district vis a vis their Reading First application will include a core comprehensive reading program based on SBRR as defined throughout this application as well as in compliance with Reading First requirements. Furthermore, districts must discuss the appropriate use of supplemental and intervention materials that will support and enhance the core reading program. Additionally, as indicated previously, the state will have a network of both technical assistance and compliance monitors who will work with assigned districts to ensure that instructional strategies, programs and materials are used appropriately.

1. All instructional materials currently in use by the LEA and all instructional materials purchased with Reading First funds must be SBRR based. Applicants must list all instructional materials currently in use and all instructional materials to be purchased and demonstrate verification of SBRR.
 - a. Do all current instructional materials and instructional materials to be purchased (including supplemental and intervention materials) align with the state reading standards? List and discuss.
 - b. Do all current instructional materials and instructional materials to be purchased (including supplemental and intervention materials) align with the comprehensive core reading program? List and discuss.
 - c. Do all current instructional materials and instructional materials to be purchased (including supplemental and intervention materials) align with the five essential components of reading? List and discuss.
2. List all current technology materials and technology materials to be purchased with *Reading First* funds. Demonstrate verification of SBRR.
 - a. Do the technology materials align with the state reading standards? Explain.
 - b. Do the technology materials align with the comprehensive core reading program? Explain.
3. Explain how teachers will receive professional training to implement the instructional materials within the core reading curriculum. Detail the plan.
4. Explain how the district's plan will ensure that all materials are used for their intended purpose – comprehensive, supplemental, or intervention.
5. Provide an assurance that instructional materials will not be used for a purpose other than their intended purpose (e.g., using supplemental materials as the comprehensive reading program).
6. Explain how instructional materials will be implemented without layering selected materials on non-research based materials. The intent of this section is to ensure that materials that meet the SBRR requirement are not layered over materials that do not meet the SBRR requirement. As stated earlier, materials not meeting the requirements of SBRR must be discontinued.

SECTION V INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Successful implementation of the Reading First goals will depend on the quality and commitment of the building and district leadership provided. Districts must indicate how they will assure that leaders at both building and district levels have the requisite expertise in SBRR.

“Weak reading programs often reflect the leadership of principals who were uninformed and uninvolved” (National Research Council’s Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children). Successful implementation of Reading First depends on the quality and commitment of the persons responsible for leadership, particularly the building-level principal and the school’s Literacy Leader. The Literacy Leader serves as a change agent and internal facilitator. This person, experienced and knowledgeable in reading, supports the principal as the building’s chief instructional officer. As such the Literacy Leader provides the necessary operational link between administration and instruction.

The involvement of teachers in implementing a SBRR reading program and in achieving the expected outcomes through the process of shared leadership and shared accountability is also essential. School systems must indicate how they will assure that leaders at both the building and school system level obtain the skills, knowledge and information they need to function as change agents and to provide the leadership necessary to implement a SBRR reading program that results in improved instructional practice and increased student achievement in reading. (Note: The State requires that a Literacy Leader (reading coach/coordinator) be assigned to each Reading First school. The position description of that person is included in the Appendix.)

The applicant must:

1. Identify who will provide instructional leadership and coordination to the Reading First in Tennessee at the school system and building level and describe:
 - their expertise,
 - time commitment to Reading First and
 - duties and responsibilities.
2. Describe how the Literacy Leader will work with the Reading First schools to ensure that: instructional practice will align with SBRR;
 - student achievement in reading increases;
 - a rigorous assessment program will be implemented;
 - professional development is intense, focused and based in SBRR and that follow-up and reflective practice are the norm.
 - the Literacy Leader will follow the position description provided with this Reading First Subgrant Application package and will not be used in positions or attending to tasks not included in the position description.
3. Provide assurances that the Literacy Leader and the building-level principal in Reading First schools will attend required State-sponsored professional development in the essential components of reading.
4. Provide assurances that the Reading First school’s Literacy Leader will attend Reading First Leading to Read® professional development.
5. Provide assurance of the continuity of instructional leadership at the school level to the extent possible.
6. Describe the process that will enable K-3 reading teachers and special education teachers to engage in shared leadership for reading leadership activities at the building level.
7. Identify a district leader with sufficient authority who will:
 - ensure alignment of the reading curriculum to Tennessee reading/language arts standards;

- evaluate school system and school-level reading progress;
 - ensure that achievement data is analyzed and used;
 - be able to ensure that real time school and classroom decisions will be made based on continuous progress monitoring of students.
8. Describe the LEA's commitment to ensuring continuity of instructional leadership at the school level.
9. What is the plan for training principals at non-Reading First schools regarding implementation of scientifically based reading instruction?

SECTION VI: DISTRICT AND SCHOOL BASED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The goal of professional development is for K-3 teachers, special education teachers grades K-12, building-level principals and Literacy Leaders to gain a deep understanding of SBRR and its implication for instructional practices. Principals and Literacy Leaders are also expected to develop leadership skills to the level necessary to plan, coordinate, and monitor SBRR programs within the school building. Teachers, principals and Literacy Leaders must understand explicitly what a SBRR classroom looks like, must recognize what effective SBRR instruction is and is not, and must possess a sufficient level of knowledge and experience to coach for instructional improvement and to monitor for effective assessment and improved student achievement in reading.

In the first grant year, the State provides 10 days of professional development to K-3 and K-12 special education teachers, Literacy Leaders and principals from *Reading First in Tennessee* schools that focus on the following:

- a. The essential components of reading instruction including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension and their classroom implementation
- b. Implementing scientifically based instructional materials, programs, and strategies
- c. Screening, diagnostic, and classroom-based instructional assessments and their appropriate classroom use

It is expected that professional development at the school system and school levels will enhance, expand and strengthen State-sponsored training. Local professional development must be an ongoing activity, must be results-based and must be clearly aligned with the instructional program as well as with State academic and performance standards. Professional development must provide adequate time for teachers to learn new concepts and to practice what they have learned. The use of coaching, including peer coaching, is encouraged.

Applicants must support the participation of teachers, principals and Literacy Leaders in state-level professional development activities. Additionally, applicants must provide a plan that supports on-going results-based professional development at the local building and classroom levels. This professional development must incorporate SBRR, must help the LEA meet federal *Reading First* requirements, and must coordinate with state-level *Reading First* activities. Providers of professional development to LEAs are expected to serve as conduits whereby information and research summaries reach school and school faculties. Providers of professional development are also expected to be available for ongoing school/classroom-based technical assistance. State-level staff will assist in this effort.

The following must be addressed in this section:

1. a professional development schedule that accommodates state-sponsored professional development (see Appendix H), but that also specifies local professional development (dates, times and so forth).
2. a general description of the criteria for selecting additional topics, other than those required by the State for the ten days of SBRR training, based on teacher need, observation of Literacy Leaders, data obtained from progress monitoring and so forth. The first five days of state-sponsored professional development are provided at the required Reading First in Tennessee Summer Reading Academy. Attendance is required by the K-3 reading staff, special education teachers,

and the school principal. The additional five days are school based and delivered by the trained TN-RFC who have been approved by the state department

3. assurance and commitment that teachers will have released time and support to attend all professional development activities (5-day Summer Reading Academy, 5 additional days or equivalent of school-based professional development by the TN-RFC, plus 90 additional hours per year of professional development which includes peer coaching, grade level meetings around SBRR reading, research discussion groups, online courses, administration and use of assessments, and so forth) and that attendance will be required and monitored.
4. assurance that the Reading First schools will evaluate district and school based professional development based on Reading First SBRR guidelines and submit the evaluations to the state. The state will give prior approval to the LEAs that the professional development selected meets the criteria of SBRR.
5. a description of the principal's role in observing and evaluation instructional performance of teachers in reading.
6. a description of how assistance and/or additional training will be provided for teachers who appear not to have understood or gained the necessary knowledge and skills during professional development.
7. an assurance that the district will use the State Professional Development Provider Rubric to identify and secure professional development providers who are highly knowledgeable of scientifically based reading research and who will provide training in addition to the ten days provided by the state.
8. assurance that professional development will center around the delivery of a balanced reading program grounded in SBRR principles.
9. assurance that the two additional days of professional development by the TN-RFC members will focus on implementing classroom-based reading tests and on understanding and using assessment to inform instruction and make data driven decisions about instruction, intervention, and the use of materials and programs. These two additional days are part of the 90 hours as mentioned above in number 3.
10. An explanation of how the LEA/school will structure the school-based professional development activities to enhance classroom implementation of new strategies. Please address the following:
 - How will the expectations for classroom implementation be established and communicated for each professional development activity?
 - How will teachers be provided with adequate time, not only for learning SBRR reading programs, but also for study, observation and reflective practice necessary to support their implementation of SBRR reading instruction?
 - How will the LEA provide targeted professional development for teachers who need additional assistance with classroom implementation of new skills and strategies related to improving reading instruction?
11. By signing the Reading First application the district Director of Schools and appropriate administrative/supervisory personnel agree to support the entire plan.

NOTE: The State is going to organize a cadre of experienced and knowledgeable reading professional development providers using selected criteria that have been developed by the State. These providers will receive extensive training in SBRR. After successfully completing the selection process and training program, these individuals will be approved to deliver Reading First Professional Development. That professional development includes five (5) days of school-based professional development, delivering curriculum mandated by Reading First at the school level, two (2) days of technical assistance, the use of assessment data, and in-classroom observation and coaching of each K-3 Reading First classroom teacher at least one per semester. An additional five (5) days of training is provided by the State to all Principals, Literacy Leaders and K-3 teachers through Summer Reading Academies. If additional professional development providers are used, the district must assure and document that these were selected using the Reading First Professional Development rubric, which will be provided by the State. The State will review the rubrics that are submitted by the LEAs.

SECTION VII **DISTRICT BASED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

This element outlines what the district will do in providing technical assistance to support schools in implementing the Reading first program and subgrants.

The LEA must describe how it will provide technical assistance for the implementation of the Reading First Subgrant in the following ways:

1. Coordinating technical assistance provided by the state department with technical assistance provided by the district to the individual schools.
2. Providing school level data for analyzing school achievement and use the data to plan intervention for continued improvement.
3. Providing a plan for assuring that all schools in the district understand SBRR instruction and have opportunities to engage in professional development.
4. Assuring that the district will direct the implementation of a core comprehensive reading program across the school system.
5. Providing system-wide Reading First activities to all schools in the district.
6. Providing new and upgraded reading programming to meet the reading needs for all students.
7. Providing training in the use of necessary and appropriate SBRR technology.
8. Provide support to the Literacy Leader in meeting Reading First subgrant goals and objectives and in understanding and fulfilling the duties of the Literacy Leader

SECTION VIII **EVALUATION STRATEGIES**

All school districts selected to receive a Reading First subgrant must use SBRR reading assessments having proven validity and reliability measures. Each school district and selected school(s) must demonstrate the effectiveness of the reading program by the following:

1. The state has selected screening and outcome tools that must be used in the by the recipients of Reading First subgrants (see Section II, Instructional Assessments of this RFP). Although LEAs are encouraged to use DIBELS as the Progress Monitoring instrument, there is an option to select other progress monitoring tests provided the test meets Reading First requirements as determined by the use of the *Analysis of Reading Assessment Measure Coding Form*. The LEA also has the option of choosing the diagnostic assessment instrument provided the test meets Reading First requirements as determined by the use of the *Analysis of Reading Assessment Measure Coding Form*.
2. Name the SBRR assessments that have been selected to evaluate the program for diagnostic and progress monitoring.
3. Explain how the school will use the information received from the selected reading assessments to drive and change classroom instruction. Separately discuss classroom change that will occur from results on all assessments: initial, midyear, and end of the year. What interventions will be used if students are not improving to meet program goals? How will the instructional program be modified to meet the appropriate student gains in reading?
4. Ensure district benchmarks for each grade level kindergarten through grade three are aligned with Tennessee State Curriculum Reading Standards for benchmarking. What interventions will be used if assessments show that students are not meeting the expected benchmarks? How will the instructional program be modified if students are not meeting benchmarks?
5. Explain how frequent, informal assessments complement the required SBRR assessment for screening, diagnosis, progress, and outcome.
6. Explain the assessment process for the district's schools not designated as Reading First schools.
7. All districts and schools in the Reading First program must agree to participate in the state evaluation and cooperate with the external state evaluator for providing all information and data requested. To determine the success of the Reading First programs operated by districts and schools that receive grants through this program, the Tennessee Department of Education will contract for an external evaluation of the statewide Reading First Initiative. All districts must document in the annual progress report(s) the following evidence:

- Reading achievement scores indicating adequate yearly progress for each of the schools participating and for the district as a whole including scores that are disaggregated by low-income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP and special education for K-3 students in the Reading First schools.
 - Evidence from the district of intervention and / or discontinuation of Reading First funding in schools not making adequate progress.
 - Evidence that the activities presented in the LEA's Reading First subgrant application are being implemented as planned. An explanation for any changes in activity will be filed with, and must be approved by, the State. In addition, as a condition of receiving Reading First funds, the State of Tennessee has provided an assurance that the state and funded LEAs will participate in the national evaluation of the Reading First program upon request.
8. Scores from the TerraNova reading test will be used by the external evaluator as to one of the measures of success
 9. Describe the LEAs plan to assist schools when the school(s) in the district do not demonstrate adequate progress in reading. What interventions and support will be provided? Who will provide the support? How often? When?
 10. Districts and Reading First schools must agree to participate in the National Evaluation if requested.

EVALUATION AND REPORTING

To determine the success of the Reading First programs operated by districts and schools that receive grants through this program, the Tennessee Department of Education will contract for an external evaluation of the statewide Reading First Initiative. All districts must document in the annual progress report(s) the following evidence:

1. Reading achievement scores indicating adequate yearly progress for each of the schools participating and for the district as a whole including scores that are disaggregated by low-income, major racial/ethnic groups, LEP and special education for K-3 students in the Reading First schools.
2. Evidence from the district of intervention and/or discontinuation of Reading First funding in schools not making adequate progress.
3. Evidence that the activities presented in the LEA's Reading First subgrant application are being implemented as planned. An explanation for any changes in activity will be filed with, and must be approved by, the State. In addition, as a condition of receiving Reading First funds, the State of Tennessee has provided an assurance that the state and funded LEAs will participate in the national evaluation of the Reading First program upon request.

SECTION IX ACCESS TO PRINT MATERIALS

It is important that students have access to a wide array of engaging reading materials, both expository and narrative texts, through libraries and reading programs. Library involvement in Reading First might be in the form of summer reading programs or through cooperative partnerships between schools and libraries to obtain additional reading materials. Additionally, other community programs may be used to enrich the print material resources of Reading First K-3 classrooms.

The local application must:

1. Describe how the LEA will promote reading and library programs that provide students with access to a wide array of engaging reading materials including both expository and narrative texts in classroom and school libraries in Reading First schools as well as other schools in the LEA.
2. Clearly describe how any federal, state, or local programs are coordinated with Reading First, such as CSR, REA, etc. and how that coordination will increase student access to a variety of engaging reading materials.

SECTION X ADDITIONAL CRITERIA

Reading First applicants must ensure the qualifications of district and building leadership, a feasible timeline for activities, and the ability to manage and leverage resources and initiatives so that

unnecessary duplication of effort does not occurs (Section X in the Rubric) Districts must also submit a cost-effective budget along with an indepth budget narrative that specifies line item costs for each year of the three-year grant. Applicants must indicate the number of students to be served. The applicant must explain how the Reading First activities will be sustained after the grant funding period has ended. (Section XI in the Rubric).

Applicants who apply for funding for Reading Excellent Act (REA) schools to become Reading First schools must be able to document that the expenditure of REA funds have resulted in increased student achievement in reading for that specific school. (see Section I Selection of Schools to be Served in RFP and in the Rubric).

READING FIRST IN TENNESSEE

SUBMISSION AND SCORING INFORMATION

GRANT SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Applicants must submit the original grant and three (3) copies to the Tennessee Department of Education. Reading First grants, either mailed or hand-delivered, are due in the Department of Education **by 4:00 P.M. on November 24, 2003**. **Mailed** grants should be postmarked on or before November 24, 2003. Incomplete or late grants will not be considered. Faxed grants will not be accepted.

Mail or hand-deliver the Reading First proposals to:

Jim Herman
Tennessee Department of Education
5th Floor, Andrew Johnson Tower
710 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37243

Application information:

- Grants size will depend on the number of schools included in the application. Please note: Each school must be included separately in the grant so that school-related areas are discussed individually for each school. A “cookie-cutter” approach to discussing each school will not be accepted.
- All pages must be standard letter size, 8½ by 11” using 10 or 12 point easy to read font. Grants should be single-spaced.
- Signature pages must be included.

SELECTION CRITERIA AND SCORING

The criteria and point totals within the evaluation rubrics below are presented to provide specific guidance for the narrative section of the grant application. To be approved for funding, applicants must meet each of the criteria within the Meets Standards category for each of the sections of the grant application.

READING FIRST IN TENNESSEE

RFP RUBRIC

Section I: Selection of Schools to be Served

7 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

The Tennessee State Department of Education will provide a list of eligible schools to each eligible LEA based on the definition under Local Use of Funds. The LEA will select the number of schools to be served based on the funding available to the LEA, with schools being most in need receiving first consideration.

Exemplary 10-9 pts	Meets Standards 8-7 pts	Does Not Meet Standards 6-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal identifies schools that meet the eligibility criteria but will not be served. Proposal provides description of addressing needs of schools not receiving Reading First funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal describes criteria and rationale used in the selection of schools. Proposal describes how LEA determined that the award would result in sufficient funding at each school to support program. Proposal describes how the number of schools identified is reasonable and appropriate considering the number of schools in the district that meet eligibility requirements. Proposal clearly describes the district capacity to support the number of schools proposed. Proposal describes a plan for addressing the needs of schools not receiving Reading First funding. Proposal demonstrates how existing resources will be used to expand the Reading First program. Proposals including current Reading Excellence Act (REA) schools in the Reading First application must address the following: discuss <u>individually</u> the success of REA school(s) in meeting all of the requirements of the REA subgrant – be 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal does not describe criteria used to identify schools. Identified schools do not meet eligibility requirements of Reading First. Number of schools identified is inconsistent with need, effective implementation or district capacity to support schools. 	

	<p>specific; show the exact improvement in K-3 reading in the REA school(s) as evidenced by valid and reliable assessments; discuss the use of REA funding and the impact on the school(s); explain in detail how the school will use the new Reading First funding in conjunction with REA funding; and clearly demonstrate the effects of REA professional development on improving teachers' instructional methods and student achievement in the REA school(s). Please be specific.</p>		
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Comments:

Section II: Instructional Reading Assessments

14 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

This section addresses the role that rigorous screening, diagnostic and classroom based assessments play in making sure barriers K-3 students face in learning to read are identified early for effective intervention. Districts and selected schools must have a plan for selecting and using these valid and reliable assessments within their instructional programs. Specific guidelines for the selection of these assessments will be available at the pre-application workshops. LEAs must provide "Analysis of Reading Assessment Measure Coding Form" for selected assessments not listed on the "Final Report: Analysis of Reading Assessment of Instruments for K-3."

Exemplary 20-18 pts	Meets Standards 17-14 pts	Does Not Meet Standards 13-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal describes how information from assessments will be used to make instructional decisions for K-3 students and to make informed decisions about appropriate interventions. Proposal describes how K-3 programs that do not receive Reading First funds are included in the system's reading assessment plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal assures the use of state selected assessments for screening and outcome measurement at each grade level K-3. Proposal describes the selection for diagnostic and progress monitoring assessments for each grade level K-3. Proposal provides evidence of the proven validity and reliability of the selected assessments. Proposal describes the process for administering assessments, including assurance that the state assessment schedule will be met. Proposal describes the process for ensuring that teachers and other appropriate persons are trained to administer and analyze assessments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal does not demonstrate the use of SBRR valid and reliable screening, progress monitoring, outcome and diagnostic instructional assessments. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal describes how information for assessments will guide and inform instruction. • Proposal describes how information for assessments will guide and inform interventions. • Proposal includes the <i>Analysis of Reading Assessment Measure Coding Form</i> (see Appendix B) for progress monitoring and diagnostic assessments not listed on the <i>Final Report: Analysis of Reading Assessment of Instruments for K-3</i> (see Appendix E). 		
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Comments:

Section III: Instructional Strategies and Programs

14 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

The federal Reading First program includes explicit expectations for identifying instructional programs and strategies based on SBRR that will address the five essential components of reading and enable all K-3 students to become proficient readers. LEAs must include "A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating A Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis" to assess all components of the comprehensive reading program.

Exemplary 20-18 pts	Meets Standards 17-14 pts	Does Not Meet Standards 13-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal describes in detail with supporting evidence how all instructional strategies meet the following standards: alignment with the Tennessee reading standards; based on scientific based research; are explicit and systematic; grounded in the five essential components of reading; and aligned with instructional materials. Proposal presents record of student achievement gains and effective use of prior grant dollars implementing reading instruction based on scientifically based reading research, e.g., Reading Excellence Act subgrant implementation within eligible schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal "A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating A Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis" to assess all components of the comprehensive reading program. Proposal names all components of the core reading program. Proposal assures that if the core reading program in place does not meet all SBRR requirements, that a new core program will be implemented. The LEA names the components of the new core reading program, how selected, name the personnel making the selection, and have included "A Consumer's Guide to Evaluating A Core Reading Program Grades K-3: A Critical Elements Analysis" (see Appendix C) to verify that the new program meets the requirements of a core comprehensive SBRR reading program. Proposal clearly identifies all discarded programs and strategies and gives assurance that the discarded programs and strategies will not 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed instructional strategies are not based on SBRR. Proposed process for selecting and implementing reading program lacks basis in SBRR. Proposed strategies programs do not teach the five essential components of reading. Proposal does not demonstrate that the reading program is a core, comprehensive SBRR instructional reading program. 	

	<p>be used in the school district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal assures that selected programs and strategies will not be layered on top of non-researched based programs and strategies. • Proposal details the LEA's monitoring plan to enable students to accelerate performance and become proficient readers. • Proposal details the LEA's monitoring plan to ensure teacher performance and to meet accountability standards. • Proposal discusses and explains the classroom management plan, including, but not limited to, the following: assuring more that 90 minutes per day of uninterrupted reading time and providing a schedule to meet this need; showing how flexible grouping will be use to meet the reading needs of students; demonstrating that planned interventions are SBRR based; explaining how the needs of individual students will be met; and explaining the districts plan to implement these procedures in K-3 grades in all schools, including non-Reading First schools, in the district. • Proposal addresses the school's assessment procedures by the following: showing how assessment will be used to drive 		
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	<p>instruction; explaining how schools will use screening assessments to identify children in need of additional instructional support, diagnostic assessments to determine students' specific instructional needs, and progress monitoring assessments to ensure that adequate progress in reading growth is being achieved throughout the year; explaining how the assessments used in the school will meet the overall accountability requirements of the grant, including outcome assessments; explaining the district's plan for assessment procedures in K-3 grades in all schools, including non-Reading First schools, in the district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal assures that all instructional strategies and programs are SBRR and are aligned with state standards. 		
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Comments:

Section IV: Instructional Materials

14 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

This element addresses instructional materials, including supplemental and intervention programs and materials. Districts and selected schools must have a plan for selecting and using these instructional materials for their intended purposes and integrating them into the comprehensive reading program.

Exemplary 20-18 pts	Meets Standards 17-14 pts	Does Not Meet Standards 13-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal describes how all instructional materials, both current and to be purchased, will be aligned with the Tennessee Reading Standards, will be based in SBRR, will be explicit and systematic, will be grounded in the five essential components of reading, and be aligned with the core reading program and instructional strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal demonstrates that all materials, both current and to be purchased, align with the state's reading standards. Materials are listed and discussed. Proposal demonstrates that all materials, both current and to be purchased, align with the comprehensive, core reading program. Proposal demonstrates that all materials, both current and to be purchased, align with the five essential components of reading. Proposal demonstrates the plan for training teachers to implement instructional materials with the core reading curriculum. Proposal assures that all materials will be used for their intended purpose – comprehensive, supplemental, or intervention. Proposal explains how instructional materials will be implemented without layering selected materials on top of non-research based materials. Proposal demonstrates that all technology materials, both current and to be purchased, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional materials do not align with comprehensive reading program. Instructional materials will be used for a purpose other than their intended purpose (e.g. using supplemental materials as the comprehensive reading program). Technology materials do not align with the state reading standards. Technology materials do not align with the comprehensive reading program. 	

	<p>align with the state's reading standards. Technology materials are listed and discussed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal demonstrates that all technology materials, both current and to be purchased, align with the comprehensive, core reading program. • Proposal discusses the plan for technology training to be implemented within the core reading program. • Proposal ensures that all technology materials will be used for their intended purposes – comprehensive, supplemental, or intervention. • Proposal explains how technology materials will be implemented without layering selected materials on top of non-research based technology materials. 		
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Comments:

Section V: Instructional Leadership

7 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

Successful implementation of the Reading First goals will depend on the quality and commitment of the building and district leadership provided. Districts must indicate how they will ensure that leaders at both building and district levels have the requisite expertise in SBRR.

Exemplary 10-9	Meets Standards 8-7	Does Not Meet Standards 6-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal identifies a district leader with sufficient authority who has responsibility for aligning the reading curriculum to Tennessee, evaluating district and school reading progress, analyzing achievement data and making real time school and classroom decisions based on continuous progress monitoring of student and teacher data. Proposal assures continuity of instructional leadership at the school level to the extent possible. Proposal describes how system level leadership personnel, such as Supervisor of Instruction, Elementary Supervisors and others will become knowledgeable of SBRR and the improvement of reading instruction. The proposal describes the plan for training principals in non-Reading First schools regarding implementation of scientific based reading instruction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal identifies who will provide instructional leadership at the district level and building level and describes expertise, time commitment to Reading First and duties and responsibilities. Proposal provides assurance that the Literacy Leader and the building level principal in Reading First funded schools attend all required state-sponsored Reading First professional development in SBRR reading. Proposal provides assurance that the Literacy Leader will attend Lead to Read training. Proposal describes how district personnel will be trained in SBRR and improving reading instruction. Proposal describes how the Literacy Leader will work with the Reading First schools to ensure that the school system's Reading First plan is implemented as approved so that increases in student achievement occur. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated individuals do not have clearly defined duties and responsibilities to provide instructional leadership. Proposal fails to provide training for principals, building leaders or district personnel related to improving reading instruction. 	

Section VI: District-and School Based Professional Development

14 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

Reading First programs must provide results-based staff development to reading educators at grantee schools that includes several required components (such as literacy leaders) set out in the review criteria. Applicants also must support the participation of these educators in state-level professional development activities, particularly the Reading First In Tennessee Academies. To assist LEAs in developing SBRR-driven professional development programs that meet the requirements of federal law and coordinate with state level activities, TDE will provide research summaries, tools, and individualized technical assistance during the Reading First training workshops. Note: The expectation is that all literacy teachers in grantee sites will benefit from participation in the RFTA regardless of the specific reading program their district/school will be implementing.

Exemplary 20-18 pts	Meets Standards 17-14 pts	Does Not Meet Standard 13-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal clearly demonstrates an intensive, coordinated, and comprehensive professional development plan based on all Reading First requirements and demonstrates a commitment to ongoing professional development at the district, school and classroom levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal demonstrates that professional development at the school system and school levels will enhance, expand and strengthen State-sponsored training. Proposal demonstrates that local professional development is an ongoing activity, is results-based and is clearly aligned with the instructional program as well as with State academic and performance standards. Proposal demonstrates that professional development provides adequate time for teachers to learn new concepts and to practice what they have learned. Proposal provides a professional development schedule that accommodates state-sponsored professional development (see Appendix H) but that also specifies local professional development (dates, times and so forth). Proposal provides a general description of the criteria for selecting additional topics. Proposal provides a commitment that teachers will have released time and support to attend all professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal does not meet the SBRR requirements of Reading First in the proposed professional development plan. Proposal does not demonstrate a coordinated or integrated professional development plan and relies on single-event workshops to deliver professional development. Proposal does not demonstrate that identified professional development providers meet the requirements of the state Professional Development Provider Rubric. Proposal for professional development is not aligned with state's professional development plan or will lead to 	

	<p>activities and that attendance will be required and monitored.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal assures that the Reading First schools will evaluate district and school based professional development based on Reading First SBRR guidelines and submit the evaluations to the state. • Proposal provides a description of the principal's role in observing and evaluation instructional performance of teachers in reading. • Proposal provides a description of how assistance and/or additional training will be provided for teachers who appear not to have understood or gained the necessary knowledge and skills during professional development. • Proposal assures that the district will use the State Professional Development Provider Rubric (see Appendix I) to identify and secure professional development providers who are highly knowledgeable of scientifically based reading research and who will provide training in addition to the ten days provided by the state. • Proposal assures that professional development will center around the delivery of a balanced reading program grounded in SBRR principles. • Proposal assures the attendance of teachers and principal at the two additional days of professional development by the TN-RFC members that will focus on implementing classroom-based reading tests and on understanding and using 	<p>duplication of efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal for professional development is not aligned with the instructional program as well as with State academic and performance standards. 	
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	<p>assessment to inform instruction and make data driven decisions about instruction, intervention, and the use of materials and programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal provides an explanation of how the LEA/school will structure the school-based professional development activities to enhance classroom implementation of new strategies. 		
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Comments:

Section VII: District-Provided Technical Assistance

7 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

This element outlines what the district will do in providing technical assistance to support schools in implementing the Reading first program and subgrants.

Exemplary 10-9 pts	Meets Standards 8-7 pts	Does Not Meet Standards 6-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal demonstrates a clear, detailed and comprehensive plan of action by the LEA to provide technical assistance to all schools in the district by the following: (1)coordinating the LEA's technical assistance with the state's technical assistance, (2)analyzing achievement data for all district schools and planning intervention, (3)ensuring that all teachers In all schools understand SBRR, (4)implementing a core, comprehensive reading program across the system, (5)providing training in the use of necessary and appropriate SBRR technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal demonstrates the coordination of technical assistance provided by the state department with technical assistance provided by the district to the individual schools. Proposal describes how the LEA will provide technical assistance to the school(s) for analyzing school achievement data and using the data to plan intervention for continued improvement. Proposal describes a plan for providing technical assistance to all schools in the district for understanding SBRR instruction and for providing opportunities to engage in SBRR professional development. Proposal assures that the district will provide direct technical assistance for the implementation of a core comprehensive reading program across the school system. Proposal describes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal does not demonstrate adequate technical assistance to by the LEA to participating schools. 	

	<p>technical assistance in providing system-wide Reading First activities to all schools in the district.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal describes technical assistance in providing new and upgraded reading programming to meet the reading needs for all students. • Proposal describes technical assistance in providing training in the use of necessary and appropriate SBRR technology. • Proposal describes technical assistance in providing support to the Literacy Leader in meeting Reading First subgrant goals and objectives and in understanding and fulfilling the duties of the Literacy Leader. 		
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Comments:

Section VIII: Evaluation Strategies

7 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

All school districts that are selected to receive a Reading First subgrant must use SBRR reading assessments having proven validity and reliability measures. Each school district and selected school(s) must demonstrate the effectiveness of the reading program by meeting all Reading First evaluation requirements.

Exemplary 10-9 pts	Meets Standards 8-7 pts	Does Not Meet Standards 6-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal describes in detail a comprehensive evaluation plan for the entire district that incorporates valid and reliable measures as demonstrated by using state selected assessments or as evidenced by the <i>Analysis of Reading Assessment Measure Coding Form</i> and will be used to document the effectiveness of the Reading First activities, describing appropriate modifications and interventions that may be needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal assures that the LEA receiving Reading First subgrants will use the state selected screening and outcome tools (see Section II, Instructional Assessments (p.15, of this RFP). Proposal names the LEA selected progress monitoring instrument and guarantees that the test meets Reading First requirements as determined by the use of the <i>Analysis of Reading Assessment Measure Coding Form</i>. The completed Form must be included with the subgrant application. Proposal names the LEA selected diagnostic assessment instrument and guarantees that the test meets Reading First requirements as determined by the use of the <i>Analysis of Reading Assessment Measure Coding Form</i>. The completed Form must be included with the subgrant application. Proposal explains how the school will use the information received from the selected reading assessments to drive and change classroom instruction. Proposal describes classroom change that will occur from results on all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal does not demonstrate that selected assessments meet Reading First requirements of SBRR validity and reliability. Proposal lacks a clear plan to document the effectiveness of local Reading First activities for individual schools and the LEA as a whole. Proposal lacks a clear plan to make decisions based on assessment and evaluation information and does not describe appropriate modifications or interventions. 	

	<p>assessments: initial, midyear, and end of the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal describes interventions that will be used if students are not improving to meet program goals and explains how the instructional program will be modified to meet the appropriate student gains in reading. • Proposal ensures that district benchmarks for each grade level kindergarten through grade three are aligned with Tennessee State Curriculum Reading Standards for benchmarking. • Proposal describes the interventions that will be used if assessments show that students are not meeting the expected benchmarks and shows how the instructional program will be modified if students are not meeting benchmarks. • Proposal explains how frequent, informal assessments complement the required SBRR assessments for screening, diagnosis, progress, and outcome. • Proposal explains the assessment process for the district's schools not designated as Reading First schools. • Proposal assures that all schools in the Reading First program agree to participate in the state evaluation by providing all required evaluation information to the state in a timely manner and, additionally, to cooperate with the external state evaluator by providing all information and data 		
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	<p>requested in a timely manner.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal assures that the district will document in the annual progress report(s) all required evidence (see Section VIII Evaluation Strategies. • Proposal describes the LEA's plan to assist schools when the schools do not demonstrate adequate progress in reading. The plan explains what interventions and support will be provided, who will provide the support, how often the support will be provided, and when it will be provided. • Proposal assures that the district and Reading First schools agree to participate in the National Evaluation if requested. 		
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Comments:

Section IX: Access to Print Materials

7 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

It is important that students have access to a wide array of engaging reading materials, both expository and narrative texts, through libraries and reading programs. Library involvement in Reading First might be in the form of summer reading programs or through cooperative partnerships between schools and libraries to obtain additional reading materials. Additionally, other community programs may be used to enrich the print material resources of Reading First K-3 classrooms.

Exemplary 10-9 pts	Meets Standards 8-7 pts	Does Not Meet Standards 6-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal describes a coordinated, comprehensive program to promote reading and library programs in all district schools, both Reading First and non-Reading First, and that students will be provided with access to a wide array of engaging reading materials, including both expository and narrative texts, in all classrooms and school libraries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal describes how the LEA will promote reading and library programs that provide students with access to a wide array of engaging reading materials including both expository and narrative texts in classroom and school libraries in Reading First schools as well as other schools in the LEA. Proposal clearly describes how any federal, state, or local programs are coordinated with Reading First, such as CSR, REA, etc. and how that coordination will increase student access to a variety of engaging reading materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal fails to promote reading and library programs that provide students with access to engaging reading materials. 	

Comments:

Section X: Management Plan/Coherence

14 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

To make a difference with the Reading First funds, districts must ensure the qualifications of district and building leadership, a feasible timeline for activities, and the ability to manage and leverage resources and initiatives so that unnecessary duplication of effort does not occur.

Exemplary 20-18 pts	Meets Standards 17-14 pts	Does Not Meet Standards 13-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal provides convincing evidence of staff commitment to implement this program. Proposal provides evidence, such as resumes, that district Reading First staff have experience and knowledge of scientifically based reading instruction. Proposal describes how the district will coordinate its Reading First initiative with other literacy programs in the district and infuse the principles of scientifically based research into all programs. Proposal makes effective use of other federal professional development resources, e.g. Titles I, II, III and V. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal demonstrates that the proposed staff for administering local Reading First activities is adequate (in size and qualifications) to support the number and needs of the selected schools. Proposal includes a detailed timeline of activities for carrying out the required elements of the Reading First program. Proposal demonstrates that the allocation of resources will be sufficient to carry out the plan successfully. Proposal describes how the district will build on and promote coordination among literacy programs in the district to increase the effectiveness of these programs and to avoid duplication of Reading First efforts. Proposal demonstrates that all activities are integrated and will operate in a coherent and seamless fashion. The LEA assures that more than 90 minutes per day of uninterrupted reading time for each classroom. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal does not include sufficient staff for carrying out LEA's Reading First plan. Proposal does not include a complete timeline of activities, including benchmarks. Proposal allocates inadequate resources to carry out Reading First plan. 	

Comments:

Section XI: Budget Page/Budget Narrative

7 pts, meets the 70% minimum requirement

Reading First applicants must submit a cost-effective budget along with an indepth budget narrative that specifies line item costs for each year of the three-year grant. Applicants must indicate the number of students to be served. The applicant must explain how the Reading First activities will be sustained after the grant funding period has ended.

Exemplary 10-9 pts	Meets Standards 8-7 pts	Does Not Meet Standards 6-1 pts	Not included; could not find 0 pts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal describes in detail how the Reading First program will be continued after funding ends. For example, how will quality SBRR K-3 reading programs continue to improve after funding ends? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal includes a cost-effective budget, both a line item and narrative description <u>in addition to</u> using the attached budget summary form. The budget narrative and line items contain specifics for each year of the three-year grant. To assist readers in evaluating per pupil costs, clearly indicate the number of pupils to be served. Proposal describes how these funds will be leveraged with other private, state or federal dollars, e.g. Title I funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed budget is not cost-effective. Proposed budget lacks the necessary detail to allow readers to evaluate its cost-effectiveness. Proposal fails to show how LEA will leverage Reading First funds with other private, state or federal dollars. 	

Comments:

Section XII Competitive Priorities

LEAs meeting the following competitive priority will be awarded five (05) scoring points by meeting one of the two criteria:

- a. at least fifteen percent of the students served by the eligible educational agency be from families with income below the poverty line, or
- b. at least 6500 children served by the eligible educational agency be from families with income below the poverty line.

READING FIRST IN TENNESSEE

SCORING RUBRIC

NOTE: Schools applying for Reading First must meet, at minimum, the standard.
However, additional points are awarded for meeting exemplary criteria.

2003 Reading First Evaluation Rubric
Application Narrative Summary of Scoring

SECTION	SECTION TITLE	POSSIBLE SCORE	SCORE
Section I	Selection of Schools to be Served	10	
Section II	Instruction Reading Assessments	20	
Section III	Instructional Strategies and Programs	20	
Section IV	Instruction Materials	20	
Section V	Instructional Leadership	10	
Section VI	District-Provided Professional Development	20	
Section VII	District-Provided Technical Assistance	10	
Section VIII	Evaluation Strategies	10	
Section IX	Access to Print Materials	10	
Section X	Management Plan/Coherence	20	
Section XI	Budget-Page/Budget Narrative	10	
Section XII	Competitive Priority	05	
	TOTAL SCORE	165	

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Fund as
written:

Fund with
changes:

Reject:

Negotiate
funding level:

Activity changes
recommended:

Recommended Changes:

REVIEWER SIGNATURE

DATE

READING FIRST IN TENNESSEE

GUIDANCE IN USING SCIENTIFICALLY-BASED READING RESEARCH

**TO ASSIST LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES
TO DEVELOP READING FIRST PROPOSALS
THAT ARE ALIGNED WITH
SCIENTIFICALLY-BASED READING RESEARCH**

Five Essential Components of Reading Instruction

- **Phonemic Awareness** – Phonemic awareness is the ability to hear, identify and manipulate the individual sounds – phonemes – in spoken words. Phonemic awareness is the understanding that the sounds of spoken language work together to make words.

Without phonemic awareness, it is likely that children will have trouble understanding how letters represent sounds and how sounds systematically represent letters in words. They will find it difficult to sound-out new words.

Phonemic awareness is strongly predictive of subsequent success or failure in learning to read in later years (Fletcher et al, 1994; Hanson and Farrell, 1995; Stanovich and Seigel, 1994; Torgensen et al, 1994). The lack of phonemic awareness is the most powerful determinant of the likelihood of failure to learn to read...(Marilyn Jager Adams, 1990). In other words, failure to develop phonemic awareness leads to a wide variety of other problems in the area of reading, particularly in decoding.

Instruction & phonemic awareness: Numerous studies have shown that explicitly teaching children about the phonological structure of words improves their reading (Adams, 1990; Anderson, Hiebert, Scott and Wilkenson, 1984; Barr and Dreeben, 1983). While older children can learn phonemic awareness, instruction is more effective with children in kindergarten and first grade (Torgesen et al, 1994).

- **Phonics** – Phonics is the understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes, (the sounds of spoken language) and graphemes (the letters and spellings that represent those sounds in written language). (The ability to associate sounds with letters and use these sounds to read words). Readers use these relationships to recognize familiar words accurately and automatically and to decode unfamiliar words.

Marilyn Jager Adams (1990) concluded that reading comprehension and other higher order reading activities depend on strong decoding word recognition skills. Even highly proficient readers depend on decoding strategies to read unfamiliar words.

Instruction & phonics: Although some children are able to teach themselves how to sound out words (Learning First Alliance, 1998), many students require systematic, explicit instruction, with many opportunities to practice newly learned decoding skills and texts that provide these opportunities ((Foorman et al., 1998). Effective teachers consistently work on decoding throughout the primary grades. In a recent research synthesis, the American Federation of Teachers (Moats, 1999) concluded that effective teaching of decoding skills moves from sound to letter patterns in kindergarten and early first grade to word families and morphemes by the second and third grade. At all stages, teachers explain print conventions, link them to spoken and written language and use these lessons as a basis for increasing word recognition ability and vocabulary knowledge.

It is important to note the benefits of explicit instruction in phonics are especially prominent for students from high poverty backgrounds (Baker and Gersten, 1982, Foorman et al, 1998). It is also important to note that research shows that poor readers tend to over-rely on context clues and pictures in trying to read unknown words (Stanovich, 1994).

- **Vocabulary Development** – Vocabulary development is the development of stored information about the meanings and pronunciation of words necessary for communication. In other words, the ability to understand and use words to acquire and convey meaning.

Instruction & vocabulary development: According to Nagy and Anderson (1984) the key to vocabulary instruction is that it must teach skills and strategies that help children become

independent learners. This is an important piece of information for teachers as they plan remediation for students who have been diagnosed as needing additional help in vocabulary development. The number of words that students with limited vocabulary knowledge need to learn in order to “catch up” with peers is too extensive to address through direct teaching alone.

Stahl and Fairbanks (1986) found that using strategies such as looking up definitions, writing them down and memorizing them had no effect on reading comprehension unless the vocabulary instruction combined the definitional information with a contextual framework. We also know that repeated exposure to vocabulary across contexts and activities helps students retain new vocabulary (Beck and McKeown, 1991).

- **Fluency** – Fluency is the effortless, automatic ability to read words in isolation and connected text. Simply put, it is the ability to read text accurately and quickly. Fluency provides a bridge between word recognition and comprehension. Fluent readers recognize words and comprehend at the same time.

Reading effortlessly and fluently is the hallmark of good reading (Adams, 1990; Snow, Burns and Griffin, 1998; Stanovich, 1996). Decades of research support the need for practice and opportunity to read with a variety of text structures to develop fluency (Hollingsworth and Eldredge, 1994; Torgeson, 1986).

Dysfluent readers struggle through the reading of each word. Most struggling readers read too little text to become fluent readers. Even worse, what they do read is too difficult for them (Hiebert, Pearson, Taylor, Richardson and Paris (1998).

Instruction & fluency: One way to increase fluency is repeated reading. Peer tutoring coupled with repeated readings can be helpful and has proven successful with certain minority groups. Simultaneous oral reading of easy materials appears to be another way to build fluency. The number of words a student reads correctly in one minute is a reliable and valid measure of overall reading proficiency (Moats, 2000).

- **Comprehension** – Comprehension is the complex cognitive process involving the intentional interaction between reader and text to extract meaning. Being able to comprehend what is read means the reader has strategies for understanding, remembering and communicating with others about what has been read. Comprehension strategies are sets of steps that purposeful, active readers use to make sense of text.

Instruction & comprehension: Students with comprehension difficulties can be taught (and must be taught) strategies used by proficient readers. It is not sufficient to ask comprehension questions. Students must be given explicit instruction in the various strategies that help them understand the text and increase their abilities to answer questions about the text and write about the material they have read (Klinger, Vaughn and Schumm, 1998; Palinscar and Brown, 1984; Pearson and Dole, 1987).

Rosenshine and Meister (1994) identified key instructional principles for text comprehension:

1. Students can learn strategies to improve comprehension. Explicit teaching of these strategies leads to significantly better understanding of text than conventional teaching. These strategies include: summarizing passages and having students ask themselves or each other both literal or inferential questions when reading.
2. Teachers must both instruct in the comprehension strategies and model them.

3. Students must have opportunities to practice applying comprehension strategies. Research has demonstrated that group practice is far superior to individual practice, especially during the early phases of learning.

Coherent Structure of Effective Reading Programs

An effective reading program is one that coherently integrates:

- Screening, diagnostic and classroom-based assessments that are valid and reliable.
- Instructional programs and aligned materials that are based on SBRR and that include explicit and systematic instruction in the five essential components of reading instruction.
- A professional development plan aligned with Tennessee's Reading First goals and state standards for reading.
- Active instructional leadership.

Scientifically Based Reading Research

Scientifically based reading research is research that applies rigorous, systematic and objective procedures to obtain valid knowledge relevant to reading development, reading instruction, and reading difficulties. This includes research that:

- Employs systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment;
- Involves rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify the general conclusions;
- Relies on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers and across multiple measurements and observations; and
- Has been accepted by a peer-reviewed journal or approved by a panel of independent experts through a comparably rigorous, objective and scientific review.

Tennessee's Reading First Goals

Using scientifically based reading research to guide all state and local activities, Tennessee Reading First will meet the following goals:

GOAL 1 - Every child will be able to read at or above grade level by the end of the 3rd grade.

GOAL 2- K-3 teachers and special education teachers will receive the results-based professional development necessary to enable them to teach reading effectively and to make sound decisions regarding reading instruction.

GOAL 3- K-3 building-level principals and Literacy Leaders will receive results-based professional development necessary for them to plan, organize, implement and monitor reading programs based on scientifically-based reading research as well as develop instructional communities of learners around reading.

GOAL 4 - Reading programs based on SBRR will be implemented for students in grades K-3.

GOAL 5 - K-3 classroom teachers will be prepared to screen, identify and diagnose reading problems facing students in K-3 classroom. (The knowledge gained through assessment results will drive instruction and/or change instruction and monitor learning).